

CLAIMS
OF THE
MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE
ON THE
MEDICAL PROFESSION:
AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY OF THE COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

October 28, 1842,

BY

DANIEL J. MACGOWAN, M. D.

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COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS,
New-York, October 29th, 1842.

DR. D. J. MACGOWAN,

Dear Sir,

AT a meeting of the Temperance Society of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the University of the State of New-York, held this day, the undersigned were appointed a committee to request for publication a copy of your interesting and valuable address delivered before them on the evening of the 23th inst. They feel that there is a peculiar appropriateness in this request to one, who was a former President of this Society and our late delegate to Europe, and whom we hope to have as our future correspondent from those scenes of your medical missionary labors in the Eastern world, for which you are on the eve of embarkation. It is with great pleasure that they execute their commission, hoping for a favorable answer.

Respectfully,

Your obedient servants,

N. CHEEVER, President.

J. H. ROSS,

JOHN SNOWDEN,

D. P. HOLTON, M. D., *Cor. Sec.*

S. F. GREEN, *Rec. Sec.*

} Committee.

THE undersigned, having heard Dr. Macgowan's address at the public meeting of the Temperance Society of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, join the above committee in requesting a copy for publication.

WILLARD PARKER, M. D.

JOSEPH M. SMITH, M. D.

CHARLES A. LEE, M. D.

WM. R. WAGSTAFF, M. D.

J. N. McLEOD, Pastor of the
Reformed Presbyterian Church.

New-York, Oct. 29, 1842.

GENTLEMEN :

YOUR note in relation to the remarks made last evening, has just come to hand. I feel persuaded that, through want of time and ability, I have not done the subject justice, yet if you deem them worthy of publication, they are at your service.

Be assured, gentlemen, that I shall ever feel happy in co-operating with you for the promotion of the great objects you have in view.

Devotedly yours,

DANIEL J. MACGOWAN.

To MESSRS.

N. CHEEVER, *President.*

J. H. ROSS,

JOHN SNOWDEN,

D. P. HOLTON, M. D., *Cor. Sec.*

S. F. GREEN, *Rec. Sec.*

Professor WILLARD PARKER, M. D.

Professor J. M. SMITH, M. D.

Professor CHARLES A. LEE, M. D.

WM. R. WAGSTAFF, M. D.

Rev. J. N. McLEOD.



TO

JOSEPH MATHER SMITH, M. D.,

PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PHYSIC AND CLINICAL MEDICINE

IN THE

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

THESE PAGES

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS GRATEFUL PUPIL,

D. J. M.

IRREGULAR PAGINATION

PAGE(S)

NO. 1-5

TEXT IS COMPLETE

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN :

YOU are associated together in your professional capacity for the extermination of a great moral evil; the object is an appropriate one, and eminently worthy your attention. The alleviation of human misery and physical suffering however produced, whether by natural or artificial causes, is the appropriate province of the healing art. Hence the medical philosopher is often no less interested in those questions which relate to the intellectual, than such as concern the physical man. Our proper study is MAN—in a state of health and when suffering under disease, in that microcosm of curious workmanship, his body, and in his moral nature, so far at least as it acts upon his corporeal frame. As a knowledge of those material agents which powerfully affect the human body, is requisite to constitute an educated physician, so also is it often of the highest moment that he should make himself acquainted with those principles and institutions, which are found powerfully to influence the mind. It has been often asked in the language of a great poet—

“Who can minister to a mind diseased?”

We answer, difficult as is the task, it is often necessary to attempt it. It is frequently the indispensable duty and the highest triumph of the accomplished practitioner to heal the maladies of the body, by attacking the mental influence which has produced or exasperated them.

The reciprocal action and reaction of the informing spirit upon the material frame it occupies, whether either of them be in a sound or a suffering state, are so intimate, that religious belief and all kindred subjects become thus for certain purposes, and within certain limits the legitimate object of medical inquiry.

Spread as the great family of mankind is, over many lands,

and under great diversities of appearance and manners, but retaining under all varieties of climate and condition, of custom, and of law, the same great features, the researches of the traveller, and the voyages of discovery, making us acquainted with these varieties, add to the resources of our profession.

Entertaining, gentlemen, as you do, these enlarged views of that noble science which you have chosen as the profession of your lives, and having in view the promotion of virtue amongst men, you will not consider the theme selected for the present occasion as inappropriate. Your attention is therefore solicited to some remarks on the claims which the missionary enterprise has upon the medical profession.

We are aware that a subject so wide in its range, and so momentous in its relations, requires for its elucidation an ability which we cannot hope to bring to the discussion. We rejoice, however, that in some of its many connexions, this cause has already elicited zealous and abler advocates. Yet the field is both so extended and so fertile, that we may succeed in presenting some considerations on the subject which may not be without their interest.

If we regard the object of christian missions but as men, desiring the advancement, elevation and happiness of our common kind, it will strongly commend itself to all the better feelings of our nature. Though greatly embarrassed in its operations by the prevailing apathy which it was so difficult to disturb, and by the inadequate resources with which it has been sustained, the missionary enterprise has, within the brief space of half a century, effected an incalculable amount of good. It has humanized savage tribes, fixed the roving, and reconciled the warring; it has deprived the cannibal of his prey by implanting in him a distaste for his horrid banquets. It has extinguished the fire of human sacrifice, and snatched from the grave its living victims. It has elevated woman from a brutish degradation to the enjoyment of that equality for which she was originally destined, the companion, the counsellor, and the friend of man, and no longer the sport of his passions, or the victim of his cruelty. Others it has taught to forsake the filthy cave or the squallid hut, and to erect comfortable dwellings, to till the soil, and to cultivate the arts. The plough, the distaff, and the shuttle, have been among its presents to the barbarous tribes it has visited. It has given to them written languages, an infant literature, and that great agent of civiliza-

tion, the press. It has erected for them, school-houses and sanctuaries, and has afforded protection to human rights, by furnishing in many cases written constitutions and laws, where the despotic will of a sanguinary chieftain had before been the law of a subject nation. But above all to secure them these and greater blessings, it has given in their own tongue, the Bible: that book which, as the dying Locke so justly remarked, "has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its contents."

We need not trespass alike on your patience and your time by enumerating all the blessings which have attended modern missions. They have accomplished all this and yet more, and they have done it, be it remembered, in behalf of classes and tribes whom many philosophers deemed utterly irreclaimable, and whom statesmen had doomed to inevitable destruction before the wasting vices of civilization and the lawless encroachments of the colonist.

Such are some of the claims this hallowed cause has upon our sympathies as members of the great human family. It commends itself also to those feelings of patriotism which we love to cherish, for this "Mercy is twice blessed." Well has its history illustrated the truth of holy writ, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." The reflex effect of the Foreign Missionary cause has been to exert a most salutary moral influence throughout the entire length and breadth of our country. Our commerce has been extended and protected by it. Wherever our countrymen meet an American missionary, they find in him an unpensioned consul and an untiring friend. It has caused the American name to be revered in many climes where otherwise it was but little known, or where known, unfavorably. Our valiant navy has not done more to make "the star spangled banner" respected, than has been done by our fellow-citizens the missionaries of the Cross, who have gone forth armed, but in the panoply of faith and charity, and with the book of God as their chosen weapon. In England the far-reaching eye of commercial enterprise, has honorably recognised the missionary cause as one which is accomplishing much for traffic, and which is destined to promote it yet more extensively. The Common Council of the City of London, aware of the advantages accruing to that mercantile community, in the emporium of the commerce of the world, from missionary labors, but a few years since voted £500 to Williams, the lamented martyr of Erromanga, to be expended in purchasing

a missionary ship, "not," say they, "as forming a precedent to assist merely religious missions, nor as preferring any sect or party, but to be an extraordinary donation, for promoting the great cause of civilization and the moral improvement of our common species." Nor are there wanting merchants in our own country, equally liberal in aiding the cause, and equally emphatic in the testimony they bore to its immediate and beneficial influence on the peaceful pursuits of commerce.

Nor is it only philanthropy and patriotism which require that we should give our aid and sympathy to this the great work of our age, but a further inducement is to be found in that desire for the promotion of science, which characterizes the intelligent physician. This feeling should induce us to labor for the prosperity of christian missions as being identified as well with the interests of science, as with those of humanity and religion. As members then of a profession which is allied to every department of human knowledge, and bringing from every field its remedies, and lending to every sphere and class its aids, we shall find that this cause presents peculiar claims upon us, which we may not disregard without incurring the reproach of insensibility and selfishness.

A leading statesman and philosopher of France, the acute and profound Guizot, has remarked before the Academy that missions would make the world known to itself. We have frequently evidence of the justness of the observation. Science in all its departments is continually receiving new acquisitions from the labors of those devoted men, who are thus contributing indirectly to the advancement of our art.

The missionary enterprise promises again to make great and valuable additions to our *materia medica*. There are extensive portions of the globe as yet unexplored, which doubtless abound in vegetable and mineral treasures. These will not be brought to light by the mere traveller, but by those who reside for long periods in the country, and who are enabled to make minute and leisurely investigations. The *materia medica* of China encumbered and deformed as it may be with inert medicaments,* yet when better known to western nations, will doubtless be found to possess some valuable medical agents, chiefly derived from the vegetable kingdom. In this connexion, it is worthy of remark

* One of these is tigers' bones. The Chinese physician reasons thus, the tiger is a very strong animal, and the bones are his strongest parts; they must therefore possess powerful tonic properties! They are accordingly employed in debility.

that we are indebted for the discovery of that invaluable medicine, the Cinchona, or as it was long called the Jesuit's bark, to a class of missionaries, who, however, have done more, it is feared, for science than for pure religion. To that distinguished missionary, Dr. Carey, the scientific world is much indebted for its knowledge of the Flora of India, and his botanical labors alone should cause him to be considered as a benefactor of our race.*

A growing disposition seems evident in our own as in most other branches of practical science, to make a common stock of all the knowledge of all nations, and to profit by the method of distant lands, and the discoveries of foreign and recent inventors. Thus it may be found that the East, far inferior as it is to us in extent of knowledge, yet has modes of treatment, and peculiar remedies, that becoming known to them by some bold experiment, or by some happy casualty, will deserve to be imitated and improved by us.

That colossal empire in the East, whither all eyes are now directed, has possessed men who, by long experience and careful observation, have attained to some degree of excellence in the healing art, but they have often been the victims of their skill. A surgeon by the name of Whâto, who flourished about the twelfth century of the christian era, was put to death, and his works were burned on account of his proposing to relieve the emperor, by performing the operation of trepaning. Tradition represents him to have been a bold and successful practitioner, and to him it is supposed reference is made by a poet, who speaks of a surgeon in that age as having removed a pearl from the eye, language which has been construed, as describing an operation for the removal of cataract.

There can be no doubt then, that pagan lands present a wide field for scientific research. Not only their peculiar diseases, but also their botany, zoology, geology, mineralogy, and kindred subjects, will prove interesting and profitable subjects to the missionary physician.

Of their diseases some are new varieties of those long familiar under mild forms to us, others, are here entirely unknown, as the hideous and hateful leprosy, a form of suffering of which even our most crowded hospitals exhibit no specimens, which must therefore be studied abroad to be studied successfully. But others

* The Leper's Hospital, near Calcutta, was founded through the instrumentality of Dr. C.

there are, that springing as by some mysterious law in the East, that cradle of our arts and knowledge and religion, have found their rapid way over deserts and oceans, and completed, ere their desolating march was stayed, the entire circuit of the globe. Thus it was that but a few years since the Asiatic cholera rolled its cloud of devastation onward from its eastern home, across all intervening barriers, and through all forms of civilization and of barbarism, until the epidemic of Hindoostan, wasted at noon-day in the streets of our western world. To cope with such migratory diseases, may not some advantage be gained by the physician, who shall in his missionary labors, meet them, as in their own original domicil, and study them where they first make their appearance ?

Of the physician it is the high and honorable boast, that with him science is merely the necessary means, to an important end, that all his knowledge is eminently practical and its great purpose benevolent. It is his province to assuage human suffering, in all its varieties and aggravations, and, in imitation of the Saviour, "to heal all manner of diseases."

To extend the influence of science then, thus reduced to an ark of mercy, in the form of a profession, is obligatory upon us, not only from gratitude to the missionary as a fellow laborer in the fields of science, and from regard to the heathen as members of the great brotherhood of man ; but also because many regions of the pagan world are at this time enduring fearful miseries, which they trace directly and undeniably to their intercourse with our commerce and our civilization. The voyager has often discovered some far island of the deep, only to corrupt and enslave its inhabitants. The science and civilization and the commerce of the lands from which he sailed, owe then a long and large arrears to the tribes who in their new vices, and their novel and hideous diseases, present some of the fearful marks of a corrupt civilization. If we have wounded it is but just at least that we should strive to heal. Our people have entailed upon pagans some of the most loathsome and frightful contagions to which the human frame is liable, in this way mutilating their manly forms, poisoning their offspring, and rapidly depopulating the beautiful islands they inhabit. If this subject were probed it would disclose a mass of iniquity and suffering, sufficient to appal every right feeling. Superadded to this source of misery,

"And worse than all, and most to be deplor'd,
"As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,"

these unhappy people are suffering from British opium, and others from American rum, evils more blighting, because from their fascinations more likely to spread, and to endure than the most terrific pestilence. Here is a vast amount of wretchedness produced by civilized man, which as civilized men, we, by our skill and experience, should strive to alleviate, nor is it too much to say, that we have it in our power in a measure to save some of these races from entire annihilation. Medical science may thus become more than the fabled wand of Esculapius, and in its humble manner be like the brazen serpent raised by the prophet in the wilderness, mighty to save a nation from impending ruin.

Accustomed as from centuries of experience the physician in civilized lands has become, to give to the chamber of sickness all the consolations and cares of the most watchful tenderness, guarding his patient from the air and the light, lest they would too rudely reach him, and in diet, and in attention, consulting unceasingly his state of feebleness and suffering, he cannot but feel more sensibly than any other class, the cruelties of heathenism, and the butchery of those tender mercies which it affords to the sick and the dying. The treatment to which invalids are subjected in those lands where the gospel does not exert its power, should excite in us our deepest commiseration. The Brahmin priest chokes often the sick Hindoo with handfuls of the mud of the Ganges, some are burned, and others are buried alive, who with care and skill in the treatment, might have speedily recovered. At times the enfeebled, the aged, and the dying, are brought to the banks of the sacred river, and there exposed to the burning sun; the mouth and nostrils filled with mire, or the wretched sufferers are held up in the river, and water is poured down their throats until they expire, or they are left naked to be tormented by clouds of insects which soon cover them. No entreaties of the wretched invalid are regarded by his murderous relations. Should he survive after being left for dead, he is beaten down with a hatchet or other weapon. And China, though she has attained the highest degree of civilization, of which a nation is capable without the gospel, presents perhaps more physical suffering, from want of medical knowledge, than any other portion of the globe. The immense multitude of blind who crowd the streets of her cities, are ample evidence of the ignorance of their physicians. Their blindness is frequently the result of a simple ophthalmia, which with

ordinary attention on the part of a good surgeon, would have been speedily subdued, and without the least unpleasant consequence; still more suffering is, however, in the earlier stages and lighter forms of sickness, occasioned by neglect and indifference on the part of those who surround the sick bed. The missionaries in the Sandwich Islands find it very difficult to prevent the more palatable and inviting viands which they prepare to tempt the appetite of the sick, from being devoured by their friends. In all works designed to meliorate such evils as these, physicians cannot fail to take an interest. They must sympathise in those benevolent undertakings, whose object is the removal of all such cruelties;—undertakings that, while aiming first to meet the wants and remedy the maladies of the deathless soul, consult also for the relief of each bodily ailment, which would assuage all suffering and raise beside the school-house and the christian sanctuary, the christian hospital. Ancient heathenism knew not the orphan-house, the infirmary, or the hospital. To *Christianity* we owe *these*, and the healing art must ever cherish a grateful sympathy in the labors that extend this beneficent religion.

We have again professional inducements to foster the work of the missionary, because of its connexions with some of the gravest and most litigated problems in physiology. Medical philosophers have by their writings, at length demonstrated the common origin of our race, thus corroborating, by scientific research, the revealed fact, “that God created of one blood all nations of the earth.” Blumenbach, Cuvier, Pritchard and Morton, concur in the support of this truth. Physiological and anatomical investigation go to establish it conclusively; does it not become then a profession which declares mankind to be one great brotherhood, to sympathise with those who are striving to elevate our degraded brethren, and shall we not give our ardent co-operation to this labor of love?

There is another consideration which gives the cause we are now aiming to commend a peculiar claim upon the benevolent feelings of medical men. Their services are greatly needed by those who have gone out from among us, to rear the standard of the Cross in unhealthy and inhospitable climes, where the life of the laborer from our Western shores is generally cut short by untimely death. The good effected has been at an immense sacrifice of valuable lives; the missionaries earnestly entreat us to afford relief. A bereaved husband who had thus lost the nearest of earthly connexions, in losing the wife of his youth, was thus

led to say that he would fain stand upon the grave of his wife, and lift up the voice of his appeal until it was heard all over America. Woman, with that heroic devotion to humanity and religion, which always and every where characterizes the sex, has gone forth in obedience to Him whom she deserted not when hanging on the Cross, to carry to the dying heathen the consolations of the gospel. Among the thousand blessings of that home she has quitted, the loss which she often feels most keenly, is the want of that unremitting medical skill and kindness, which, though equally needed by her abroad, are there all unknown. Does not every generous and manly feeling prompt us to afford the resources of our art to those who so touchingly and eloquently implore our aid, and who deserve so well at our hands?

The facilities afforded the physician for commending Christianity to the degraded and benighted heathen, are so great that it would seem his imperative duty,—if not going himself to the rescue,—to co-operate in every possible manner with those who *have* gone forth. There are none of us who are not indebted to that gospel, in the order and freedom it has established amongst us, and in the science it has cherished, and the arts it has aided to cultivate. The physician has access to communities and families in heathen lands as a missionary laborer, where the evangelist is not permitted to enter. He has it in his power at once, to give to the distrustful heathen palpable demonstration of the benevolence of his errand. This he can do with comparatively an imperfect knowledge of the sufferer's language. The minister of the gospel, on the other hand, can do nothing of his appropriate work without the language. He is compelled to toil long, and amidst obloquy and reproach, before he can convince his hearers that he is actuated by disinterested motives, the existence of which class of feelings it is exceedingly difficult for the pagan to believe.

“A word in season, how good is it?” and at no season is man more docile and teachable, than when suffering under bodily affliction, it is then, that a kind and earnest exhortation from the physician makes deep impressions, which frequently result in that moral change which, in sacred writ, is termed a “new creation.” What an immense power for good can the physician in any land wield, and how fearful is the amount of responsibility it involves!

The divine missionary himself blended with the heavenly wisdom of his doctrines the winning energy of his miracles: with

his preaching, he united the healing of the sick, the restoring of sight to the blind, and the causing of the lame to walk. Our Saviour knew what was in man, and that the healing of his bodily infirmities often served to soften his heart and make it accessible to the truth; he accordingly employed this as an ally to his ministrations and directed his followers to proceed on the same principle. Amongst the earliest of his laborers was Luke, "the beloved physician," who accompanied the great Apostle of the Gentiles in his missionary travels. To this member of our profession belongs the distinguished honor of being the first historian of the christian church. It is to be hoped that soon every Paul may have a Luke for his companion.

The call that is wafted by almost every breeze from pagan lands for the medical missionary, has met with a response from many, and the success that has attended their labors is so manifest and gratifying, that we must accord to the system which employs them our hearty approbation. We appeal then here, to the past experience of missions, recent and brief as this history as yet is, in favor of this form of labor.

The late Dr. Price, through his professional services in Burmah, obtained an influence over the Court of Ava, and the Lord of the Golden Throne, as the emperor is called, which promised the happiest results. The royal family and nobility had entrusted to him the education of their children; and had his life been spared, he perhaps might have prevented the expulsion of the American missionaries from that country, an event which has since taken place. A similar influence had been won at the same court by his predecessor, Felix Carey, who was also a practitioner of medicine, no less than a missionary.

But it is in China, that the medical art is likely to prove most efficacious as a coadjutor to the gospel. Drs. Colledge and Parker have, by their hospitals in that empire, already done much to dispel the prejudices of the Chinese, and to impress them with more enlarged and liberal feelings towards the barbarians of the West. The hospitals which philanthropy has planted on their borders, are accomplishing more than the artillery of the whole civilized world would effect, in breaking their great wall, not that which repelled the Tartars of the North, but the loftier and stronger barriers of pride and prejudice, which have made them scorn all other lands and people as vassals and barbarians. A dozen surgeons, armed with their scalpels, can do more in this

way than legions of bayonets. Our science and our religion are ample remedies for all the evils these three hundred and sixty millions of people suffer. The medical knowledge of Gutzlaff, has availed him much in his excursions along the coasts of China. This interesting people are beginning to appreciate the value of our medical knowledge, and gladly avail themselves of its blessings when proffered them.

Is further evidence desired of the importance of medical men to the cause of missions? Behold Dr. Grant, armed only with his needle for the removal of cataract, forcing mountain passes, and amidst ferocious warriors, winning his way to their homes and their hearts. On account of his professional skill, he was enabled to traverse in safety regions heretofore untrodden by civilized man; where inevitable death met the ordinary traveller, and in whose defiles an army would perish in attempting to effect a forcible entrance. Dr. Grant is now successfully ministering to the spiritual and temporal necessities of the Independent Nestorians.

We might quote to the same effect, the statement of Dr. Bradley with regard to Siam. He is stationed at Bangkok in that kingdom. "Such was the crowd and the urgency of many of the cases," says Dr. B., "that it was utterly impossible to prevent our houses from becoming hospitals. If, from a sense of duty to ourselves and families, we were constrained to close our doors against the sick, they would still crowd themselves into our verandah and thus cast themselves on our compassion. The relatives and acquaintances of many who were literally all corruption, 'helpless and hopeless,' brought them to our doors and then forsook them. Thus our abode was almost constantly the scene of the groaning, the dying and the dead. Never can I forget the horror that brooded over us at that time. It was a salutary initiation into medical service in Bangkok. While every thing possible was done to relieve the temporal condition of the people, I also gave them christian books, and set in operation a system of reading, by which it was hoped their minds would be benefited." This alumnus of our institution succeeded in introducing inoculation, and subsequently the blessings of vaccination into Siam, thus becoming the Jenner of an empire of four millions.

Dr. Scudder of Ceylon, also an alumnus of this college, in his appeal to pious physicians, says of the natives, "when they have seen me amputate, or heard of my amputating limbs and per-

forming the operation for cataract, tapping in dropsy, &c., they have called me the god of this world, and a worker of miracles. In point of miraculous powers, they have said I have borne away the palm from their great idol Corduswammy." Dr. S. thinks there should be a pious physician attached to every missionary station.

In Africa, and in the islands of the Pacific, in India, and in Syria, American physicians are now devoting their best energies, for the propagation of that religion which brings peace on earth and good will to men. Many of those also are alumni of this institution. The missionary periodicals teem with most interesting statements from our countrymen who have gone out in the capacity of missionary physicians, and no one possessed with ordinary benevolence, can peruse their narratives without feeling a deep interest in the success of the undertaking. The pages of the Chinese Repository abound with records of cases treated in China and Siam, which are as valuable to medical science as they are cheering to mercy and truth.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions appear to have adopted as their settled policy, to place a physician at every considerable station. They have now in their service eighteen physicians, the greater part of whom are laymen, some being, however, at the same time ordained ministers.

The plan seems to meet the favor of British christians, amongst whom an eminent clergyman of the English establishment, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel has said, in his excellent work on Christian Missions, "this experiment of making a christian physician the coadjutor of several ordained evangelists, has so far answered in several of the American Missions, that the practice has been extending, and we ought surely to profit by their experience."

The London Missionary Society, a few years since, made a strong appeal to English practitioners, through the columns of the London Lancet, desiring their co-operation in promoting medical missions. This society has now several medical gentlemen in the field.

The French Foreign Missionary Society is making arrangements to send out a competent physician to their flourishing stations in South Africa.

It is a favorable omen, that medical men in England and Scotland, have manifested much interest in this form of usefulness.

Several societies have been formed amongst them, whose object is to promote christianity in heathen countries through the agency of their profession. The late Sir Henry Hallford, President of the Royal College of Physicians, delivered an address on "the results of the successful practice of physic" before a meeting of that body, which was attended by the ministers of the crown, and some of the principal nobility of the land. In this discourse Sir Henry enters at length into the question of promoting the sacred truths of our holy religion, by employing the resources of medicine in conjunction with the preaching of the Gospel, thus casting the weight of his influence as a distinguished and successful practitioner in favor of this good work.

The Royal College of Surgeons in London, have agreed to educate a certain number of Chinese youths to promote the object in view. Nor has our own venerable Alma Mater been slow to express the same sympathies, and has extended cheerfully and without charge, the advantages of her valuable lectures, her museum, her demonstrations, and her clinical instruction, to all missionaries desiring to avail themselves of the opportunity of attendance. In several of our cities, including New-York, there exist associations of physicians, whose design is to promote the same humane and christian object. It is proper that it should be so, for a very large proportion of all the medical missionaries abroad are our own countrymen.

We have hitherto spoken mainly of the past and prospective *temporal* benefits of the Missionary enterprise, but, gentlemen, while you rejoice at this the dawning of a brighter day upon our race, you are at the same time fully aware that the first, and highest, and holiest claims of this cause rest on the fact, that it is an instrument which diffuses spiritual blessings wherever it is permitted to operate. The temporal advantages, great and manifold though they are, yet in the estimation of the christian are but as the light dust in the balance, in comparison with those which accompany the conversion of one soul. Astronomy, in attempting to convey an idea of the immensity of the universe, finds terms and figures totally inadequate, so much does it exceed the power of language to describe, and so far does it transcend the capacity of the mind to imagine. It is so, when we consider the value of an immortal soul. And when we remember, that in the judgment of charity, one hundred and eighty thousand pagans have already been regenerated by the Spirit of God through the in-

strumentality of existing missions, all the meaner advantages of the enterprise are forgotten in comparison, and the mind of the inquirer vaults from the maladies, and the remedies, the arts, and the improvements of earth, to the blessings, the deliverances, and the triumphs of heaven, and the centuries of time vanish before the cycles of eternity.

But it may be said, that such considerations are out of place before a medical audience, that, as a class, their studies tend to render them indifferent or sceptical as to religion. Materialism has been supposed to prevail among medical men. The old proverb said of our profession, that when three physicians met, two atheists might be found. Such charges have been made, and have perhaps produced an impression in some minds, that the assertions were founded in truth. A slight examination will satisfy the candid inquirer, that the study and the practice of medicine have in fact a contrary tendency. We might, indeed, infer that such would be the result, from a priori reasoning; but let facts decide.

Hippocrates and Galen, though possessing but the dim light which was reflected from the book of nature, recognised a superintending Providence, and did homage to the religion of their respective countries. The illustrious father of our art, imbued with such feelings, complied with the urgent calls of suffering humanity in foreign countries, and visited them for the purpose of ministering to their relief. His great commentator successfully combated the atheism of Rome, showing as Paley has since done, the evidence of design in the structure of the human body. And who that has studied anatomy will be surprised to learn, that by its teachings Galen was enabled to vanquish that blind atheism which would make man fatherless, and describe the world as the handiwork of chance and the sport of fortune?

Ambrose Paré, the father of French surgery, like his brother Huguenots, was deeply imbued with the spirit of the gospel. That priest-ridden monarch, Charles IX., caused his life to be spared in the St. Bartholomew massacre, on account of his professional worth.

The immortal Harvey was strictly a religious man. Botellus, who introduced blood-letting into Europe, advises a physician, when called to visit a patient, never to leave his house, without offering up a prayer to God for the success of his prescription. Cheselden, the celebrated English anatomist, was a man of prayer, and before performing an operation, his practice was to implore Divine assistance in the presence of his class. Sir Thomas Brown, a

physician of considerable celebrity in former days, but more eminent as a profound thinker, upon whose style Johnson's was modelled in some measure, says in his *Religio Medici*, "I never hear of a person dying, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit, I cannot go to cure the bodies of my patients, but I forget my profession and call unto God for his soul."

Melchior Adam, an old German author, wrote an interesting biography of pious physicians. Sydenham was a decided christian. Hoffman and Stahl were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Of Boerhaave, it is said by Johnson, the great moralist and philosopher of England, in his biography of that physician, "as soon as he rose in the morning, it was throughout his whole life his daily practice to retire for one hour for private prayer and meditation. He often declared that a strict obedience to the doctrine, and a diligent imitation of the example of our blessed Saviour, was the foundation of true tranquillity." Sydenham could say, "the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Dr. Hartley, so celebrated as a profound metaphysician, was equally pious. So also was Dr. Fothergill. Hey, the surgeon, was as celebrated for his piety as for his genius. Zimmerman, when called into Prussia by Frederick the Great to prescribe for him in his last illness, made every effort to convince the unhappy monarch of his fatal errors, and urged him to believe in the Saviour.

In like manner we might cite a host of names of distinguished European physicians, whose precepts and example, afford conclusive evidence that our science fosters, rather than checks religious feeling,—such for instance as Linnaeus, Jenner, Denman, Stilling,* Sir Charles Bell,† Good‡ and others. Dr. Rush, who refers

* In the general declension of piety that overspread the churches and schools of Germany, much was done to counteract the growing irreligion by Jung Stilling, a friend of Goethe, who in his memoirs alludes to him, as a singular example of trust in Divine Providence. Although educated as a physician, he was not distinguished in the walks of his own profession except as an oculist. In this branch his practice was most extensive and successful. His chief labors were directed to other objects of general literature and religion.

† This great physiologist is the author of one of the Bridgewater Treatises on the Mechanism of the Hand as illustrating the Wisdom and Goodness of God.

‡ The following memorandum and prayer having been found among the late Dr. Good's papers, are annexed to his work, in compliance with the directions which he left on the subject.

"July 27, 1823.

"FORM OF PRAYER,

"Which I purpose to use, among others, every morning so long as it may please God

to several of those medical worthies, says, "the weight of their names alone in favor of revelation is sufficient to turn the scale against all the infidelity that has ever disgraced the science of medicine." A memoir has very recently made its appearance in England, of Dr. James Hope, distinguished as the author of two most valuable treatises, one on morbid anatomy, and the other, on diseases of the heart ; which latter has been pronounced the best work of its class in existence. Of him it is there said, that when taking leave of his father, and about to enter on the practice of his profession, his parent said to him, with great dignity and solemnity, "Now, James, I shall give you the advice I promised, and if you follow it, you will be sure to succeed in your profession ; first, never keep a patient ill longer than you can possibly help ; secondly, never take a fee to which you do not feel justly entitled ; thirdly, always pray for your patients." A short time before his death, Dr. Hope said that these maxims had been the rule of his conduct, and that he could testify to their success. Of his departing moments it is said, "his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ was distinguished by purity, simplicity, and steadfastness ; his peace and joy were unclouded by even one fear or doubt. He loved to talk of his approaching departure, and of the glories which awaited him. On one occasion he said, 'when we approach the

that I shall continue in the exercise of my profession ; and which is here copied out, not so much to assist my own memory, as to give a hint to many who may perhaps feel thankful for it when I am removed to a state where personal vanity can have no access, and the opinion of the world can be no longer of any importance. I should wish it to close the subsequent editions of my *STUDY OF MEDICINE*.

"O Thou great bestower of health, strength, and comfort ! grant thy blessing upon the professional duties in which I this day engage. Give me judgment to discern disease, and skill to treat it ; and crown with thy favor the means that may be devised for recovery ; for, with thine assistance the humblest instrument may succeed ; as, without it, the ablest must prove unavailing.

"Save me from all sordid motives ; and endue me with a pity and liberality towards the poor, and a tenderness and sympathy towards all ; that I may enter into the various feelings by which they are respectively tried ; may weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice.

"And sanctify Thou their souls, as well as heal their bodies. Let faith and patience, and every christian virtue they are called upon to exercise, have their perfect work ; so that, in the gracious dealings of thy Spirit, and of thy Providence, they may find in the end, whatever that end may be, that it has been good for them to have been afflicted.

"Grant this, O Heavenly Father, for the love of that adorable Redeemer who, while on earth, went about doing good, and now ever liveth to make intercession for us in Heaven. Amen."

Dr. Good made it a point to give his services gratuitously to missionaries. Mrs. Judson, we believe, thus experienced his skill and kindness while in London.

invisible world, it is astonishing with what intensity of feeling we desire to be there.' A few moments before he died, he uttered the words, '*Christ—angels—beautiful—magnificent—delightful*;' and turning to Mrs. Hope, said '*indeed it is.*' "

The physicians and surgeons of our own land, who have shed lustre on the profession, have generally been christians. Foremost in the list, is Dr. Rush, the Luther of the Temperance Reformation. All the works of this great man, are pervaded with a spirit of deep piety. In his lectures he frequently enjoined upon his class the importance of religion, and he particularly warned them against neglecting public worship, ascribing to that habit, the moral downfall of many physicians. He used to assure them that to no other secular pursuit does the christian religion afford more aid than to the medical profession.

Dr. Bard, the first President of the New-York Medical Society, author of several valuable monographs, and the consulting physician to Washington, was remarkable for the fervor of his religious feelings. Our metropolis has many names worthy of being associated with those just enumerated, such as Williamson, Charlton, Cogswell,* Watts, Wright Post, Willet, Ives, and others, whose thorough knowledge of their profession, so far from making them sceptical, caused them to be more ardent believers in the gospel. Dorsey, Wistar and Ramsay, might also be adduced to strengthen our proposition. Dr. Thatcher, in his American Medical Biography, seems to take pleasure in referring to the religious character of those whose memoirs he writes, and his materials for this were ample.

Some of those who have endeavored to engraft infidelity upon our science, have made themselves ridiculous by the absurdity of their theories, and the blind credulity of the attempt. Dr. Darwin, a man of genius but a rejecter of the gospel, could find for the human race no more respectable parentage, in his infidel cosmogony, than the sedate and retiring oyster!†

But it would not be difficult to prove that those of them, who examined the claims of the Bible, with the attention and earnestness, which the subject deserved, were led to renounce their errors. Amongst such men we might name Sir John Pringle,

* A correspondent of Cowper.

† This was but an improvement on the theory of Lord Monboddo, who dated our origin no lower in the scale, than to the monkey; the Doctor only carried out the idea; had he lived in our day philosophic consistency would have induced him to refer us to the sponge, which naturalists now agree in regarding as an animal.

who abandoned his scepticism and became a christian. Baron Haller, after his conversion, wrote an admirable treatise in defence of the Scriptures. He was eminent for genius as a poet, philosopher and physician, and his virtues and talents won the applause even of his scoffing cotemporary Voltaire. Dr. Bateman, the great writer on cutaneous diseases, in the latter years of his life disclaimed most earnestly his sceptical opinions, and embraced the truths of the gospel. Professor Godman, the celebrated American anatomist, in the declining years of his career, from being a decided deist, became, by the grace of God, a renewed man, and died in the full hopes of a blessed immortality.

Nor should we omit the name of one, who gave the most striking proof of his attachment to the religion he had learned to love, by going in a day when missions were little popular, as a missionary to the Hottentots, then regarded as the most degraded tribe of mankind, and by some even deemed the connecting link between man and the baboon. Dr. Vanderkemp was, in his native country, Holland, as a scholar and a physician, celebrated for his talents and attainments. He was unhappily a sceptic, but subsequently became a warm christian and a zealous missionary. He, who had been admired in the Universities of Holland, in that age among the most eminent in Europe, carried to the most brutish and degraded of savages the light of life. He was the founder of the South African mission.

We shall not speak of those now on the stage of action, but merely remark, that at no previous time has the medical profession had, in proportion, so few infidels as at the present time.

We had recently an opportunity of observing, that in Paris the influence of such writers as Voltaire, Diderot, and Helvetius, is on the wane amongst the physicians and surgeons of a city that may be called the medical metropolis of the world. There are at present not a few in the profession in that city, who are either nominal or evangelical christians. Men, too, who are not unknown to fame.

A multitude of facts might be here adduced, to prove that precisely such objects as are contemplated by the modern missionary enterprise, have ever interested many of the leading minds of our profession, but we must waive this, as we have already trespassed upon your patience.

There is then, a manifest propriety in calling upon a profession that has had so many eminent christians amongst its eminent

practitioners, to aid the missionary cause not only from philanthropic and scientific, but also from religious considerations.

A regard for the honor of our body requires at least, that we should promote indirectly the object whose claims have been so feebly advocated this evening, but which commends itself to all the generous emotions of the heart, no less than to the approbation of the intellect. We may support the cause by our influence and by our contributions, especially in sustaining the medical department. Associations of medical philanthropists might assume in part the expenses for medicines, instruments, and books, and receive in return, reports and communications from the physicians aided.

But there are many who are bound to aid the cause directly, by going in person to those moral wastes, and thus through professional skill become instruments of spiritual and temporal good, to that large portion of our race, who are sitting in the valley of the shadow of death, sick and ready to perish.

A large number of pious physicians are now wanted for this glorious work. Can such of them who have not yet settled down in practice refuse to go without incurring guilt? As christians, they are bound to occupy those posts where they can most effectually serve their Lord and Master. The question, then, for them to consider is, whether they can be most useful amongst the perishing heathen, or amongst surfeited christians. The problem given is to ascertain where, as a christian and as a physician, his services are most required. No pious man, who has chosen this profession, should fix unalterably his situation, without first invoking light and aid, where Harvey, Sydenham, and Boerhaave sought it, making it a matter of serious prayer and self-examination, as to his duty respecting the last command of his Redeemer, to preach the gospel to every creature. This, experience has shown can be done in some degree by any believer who is imbued with its heavenly spirit. The call for personal consecration to this truly sublime employment, is not only addressed to those who have recently completed their preparatory studies, or who are near doing so, but to all whose peculiar circumstances do not absolutely forbid their entertaining the project.

The men needed for this work are such, and such only, as possess the same self-denying spirit as the evangelist, and the Lord and Master of the evangelist. The medical missionary should have great singleness of purpose, never allowing his

secondary object, the healing of disease, and the promotion of science, to become his primary one ; this honor should in his mind belong only to the conversion of souls, else in the end he will prove a stumbling block to the heathen, and a scandal to the Church. He must literally give himself and that for life ; he must resolve to live poor, and to die poor, looking for his reward to the great Physician of our souls, and be content for the present, with the rich luxury of doing good. So do, and the blessing of many ready to perish will come upon you. The path to the grave will not be made more gloomy, the season of suffering will not want its consolations, and the dying hour beneath a foreign sky, far from the old familiar scenes of home, will not be on that account more terrible to him who knows that from any shore, the christian's ascent to his home, is speedy, safe, and sure, and that the angels who bore from the rich man's gate, and from the wasted and ulcerated body it was quitting, the emancipated spirit of Lazarus, can with equal care and with equal fidelity, find their commissioned way, to any scene, however remote, or solitary, or rude, where the christian may be called to die.

NOTE.—Page 11.

At the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Temperance Society of this College, held Feb. 23, 1841, Dr. Grant stated, that about seven years previous, he sailed from Boston for the Mediterranean, in a small merchant vessel loaded with New-England rum. In this vessel the missionary embarked—the antidote and the poison to be wafted by the same winds to a distant shore. At Constantinople he took another vessel, American built, and formerly used for the American slave trade, but then commanded and owned by Englishmen. Her cargo also consisted of New-England rum ! In passing from Smyrna, on his way to Persia, he was accompanied by merchants. Here again he found one of the articles of their merchandize to be—what ?—New-England rum ! From thence he proceeded to the more mountainous regions of Persia, under the protection of a caravan, or company of merchants, having with them about one hundred mules and horses, chiefly laden with New-England rum ! Messrs. Smith and Dwight, in their travels from Constantinople to the interior of Turkey and Persia, under a similar protection, when encamping for the night, had the mortification of stumbling over casks of New-England rum ! He had found, in every section of Persia he visited, the inhabitants to be perfectly ignorant of the English language. No—he was mistaken—not entirely ignorant of our idiom, for every soul of them understood one monosyllable, and could clearly and properly pronounce—rum !

C L A I M S

OF THE

MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

ON THE

MEDICAL PROFESSION.

BY DANIEL J. MACGOWAN, M. D.
